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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY 16, 2007

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for February 16, 2007. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL

HURRIYET / SABAH / ZAMAN: The dailies report that some businesses at parts of the provinces in eastern and southeastern Turkey closed their businesses for one day in protest of the eighth anniversary of arrest of Abdullah Ocalan by the Turkish authorities on February 15; sporadic illegal demonstrations took place. Businessmen in parts of Diyarbakir did not open their businesses in the morning hours. The dailies report some businesses as choosing to stay open in Hakkari. Around 10 a.m. in the morning, Hakkari Deputy Governor, Hakkari Commando Brigade Commander and Provincial Jandarma Commander and the Security Director paid visits to tradesmen and thanked those who chose to stay open throughout the day. Sabah daily reports that when tension broke out between a jewelry shop owner and a group of DTP members who tried to convince the jeweler to close his business in Yuksekova, the 17-year-old son of the DTP district chairperson was wounded by gunfire. The daily observed that some businesses in Mersin, Sirnak, Siirt, Mardin, Batman, Sanliurfa and Adana acted in accordance with the call of the terrorist organization. In Batman, police detained 11 people making preparations to launch activities with Molotov cocktails. In Diyarbakir, tradesmen in Baglar, Surici, Sehitlik and Kayapinar quarters observed the rule of shutting their businesses, however, the tradesmen in the main streets of Diyarbakir, in Ofis and Yenisehir quarters reportedly stayed open. People, mostly children, conducted illegal demonstrations in Mersin. Diyarbakir Governor's Office circulated a request from the public institutions to report staff members and workers who boycotted work yesterday and the students who boycotted school.

GUNDEM: The pro-PKK newspaper Gundem reports that ninety percent of tradesmen in Diyarbakir closed their businesses yesterday. Hundreds of people, civil society organizations, some mayors and DTP members reportedly gathered in front of the DTP party headquarters and held a silent march towards the Kosuyolu Park in Diyarbakir. Women wore white headscarves and put on a black ribbon around their heads as if they wore a shroud. The protests occurred in Mardin's Nusaybin, Kiziltepe and Derik districts despite strict security measures taken by the police there. The daily reports that there was a high level of tension in Kiziltepe throughout the day and tradesmen there strictly complied with practice of not opening their businesses.

The demonstrators, most of whom were comprised of children and youth, set small fires with tires, carried posters of Abdullah Ocalan and flags of so-called democratic confederalism, chanted slogans in Kurdish and Turkish in support for Abdullah Ocalan. Some clashes took place at times when police intervened in the ongoing protest activities. The daily further gives detailed reports about demonstrations that went on throughout the day yesterday in sections and districts of Diyarbakir, Van, Batman, Siirt, Hakkari, Mersin and the refugee camp in Maxmur in northern Iraq. The brochures being delivered in those places urged people to close down their businesses for one day and urged students to boycott schools. The brochures further told people to fast, wear black apparel, and not go out in the streets, as a sign of protest against Ocalan's arrest.

ADANAHABER ONLINE / BOLGE: A group of pro-PKK protestors held a protest in Barbaros quarter of Adana and reportedly used many children in their protest activity. When the demonstrators built barricades, burned tires in the street and threw stones at the police, the police intervened with armored police vehicles. The demonstrators dispersed into the back streets and the police put out sporadic fires caused by burning tires. The anti-riot teams have been striving to control the situation at the site of the protest.

GUNDEM: The U.S. is increasing its pressure on Denmark against the broadcast of pro-PKK Roj TV. Danish Royal Prosecutor placed a request to initiate a new investigation process against Roj TV. Opposition parties indicated that this move came as a result of pressure exerted by the U.S.

GUNDEM: The court continued to hear the case against Cizre Mayor Ayhan Budak and six other people for making statements praising the PKK during the March 21 Newruz celebrations in 2006 in Sirnak's Cizre district.

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SECURITY

GUNDEM: A 37-year-old police officer was found shot in the head in front of his house in Diyarbakir. Diyarbakir police started investigating the incident.
CRIME / LAW ENFORCEMENT:

SABAH (GUNEY) / HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): A 21-year-old person, who fled the scene after running into a 20-year-old medical faculty student on December 12, 2005 with his car in Adana, has been sentenced to 6 years in prison. The mother of the victim protested the verdict.

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Regarding the case of a 10-year-old boy who died when a bullet from an unknown source hit him as he was playing in the street in a section of Adana on February 8 (see press summary for February 13), the daily reports that the sister of the victim has identified the perpetrator as the son of the mayor of Havutlu district (from AKP) in Adana.

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Police found more than 3 kilograms hashish in the luggage of a passenger in an inter-city passenger bus in Hatay's Belen district.

ECONOMY

HURRIYET / ADANAHABER ONLINE / ZAMAN / BOLGE / SABAH (GUNEY): Hilmi Guler, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, came to Adana to attend the ceremony marking the loading of 100th petroleum tanker at the Ceyhan end of the Baku-Tibilisi-Ceyhan pipeline in Adana. The minister announced that 300 million dollars were earned from 76 million barrels of oil that was loaded onto tankers from the Ceyhan terminal. The general manager of Botas International Limited said that the 100th tanker was the biggest tanker that was loaded at Ceyhan to date with a capacity of 2 million barrels.

CULTURE / SOCIETY / ENVIRONMENT

GUNDEM: When the petroleum pipes of Perenco Petroleum Corporation located within the borders of two hamlets in Diyarbakir exploded as a result of an accident twenty days ago, oil spilled and polluted the water in the area. People, whose drinking water has been cut off, have been covering long distances to get water from clean sources. Because of the spill, large numbers of fish and birds also died in and around a lake where fish were being cultivated.

GREEN